



United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

# Wildlife Habitat



People rely on wildlife to fulfill everyday needs, from food to medicine to recreation. Natural habitat loss and destruction is an increasing threat to the survival of wildlife. Through cooperative conservation partnerships with private landowners, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps establish and improve fish and wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations.

NRCS works to enhance upland habitats including grasslands, shrub/scrub and forests, and wetland habitats such as flooded crop fields, salt marshes, wetland hardwood hammocks, mangrove forests, and wild-rice beds and riparian and instream aquatic habitat along streams, rivers, lakes, sloughs and coastal areas.

NRCS installs many conservation practices to create and improve fish and wildlife habitat, emphasizing practices that benefit at-risk species. These include: restoring gravel spawning beds and removing barriers to fish passages, seeding and plantings, creating alternative watering facilities for livestock, installing culverts or water control structures, installing buffers, managing brush, and more.

NRCS voluntary programs that offer financial and technical assistance for wildlife habitat conservation include:

- Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) – This program provides the technical assistance, including direct cooperative conservation planning, design and implementation assistance, that helps people conserve, maintain and improve their natural resources.



- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) – This program helps eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on their land.
- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) – This program assists landowners with restoring and protecting wetlands through cooperative conservation easements and cost-share agreements.
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) – This program is for people who want to develop and improve fish and wildlife habitat primarily on private land.
- Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) – This program helps landowners restore and protect grassland, rangeland, pastureland, shrubland and other land, and provides assistance for grasslands rehabilitation activities.
- Conservation Security Program (CSP) – This program rewards landowners who have implemented effective conservation practices on their land.

Through these programs, NRCS is able to help landowners install conservation practices that will attract and enhance wildlife populations on their property. From 2002 through 2004, NRCS has provided over \$ 1.3 billion for direct financial and

*Helping People Help the Land*

technical assistance to landowners to establish wildlife habitat management practices on their land. (See graph).

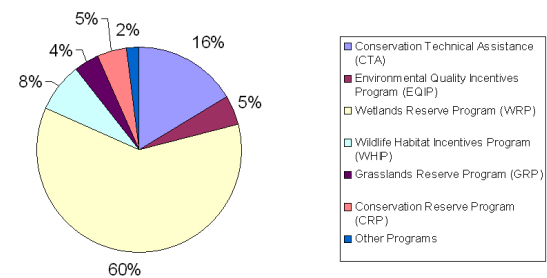
NRCS has been successful at enhancing the quality of wildlife habitats on all lands and aquatic areas. Payments received under WHIP have assisted producers with management activities that improve wildlife habitat. One client received \$10,000 in WHIP funds to assist with the cost of installing cutbank shelters and "lunker structures" which provide foraging sites and safe shelter for trout. The funds were also used to construct fencing to exclude livestock from the stream and to install vegetative plantings for streambank stabilization which benefited wildlife habitat and water quality. In FY 2004, measures to improve wildlife habitat were applied on 6.3 million acres of land. (See map.)

NRCS assists landowners in enacting conservation practices on their land by cultivating cooperative conservation partnerships. Every year, NRCS enters into thousands of agreements with its partners. In

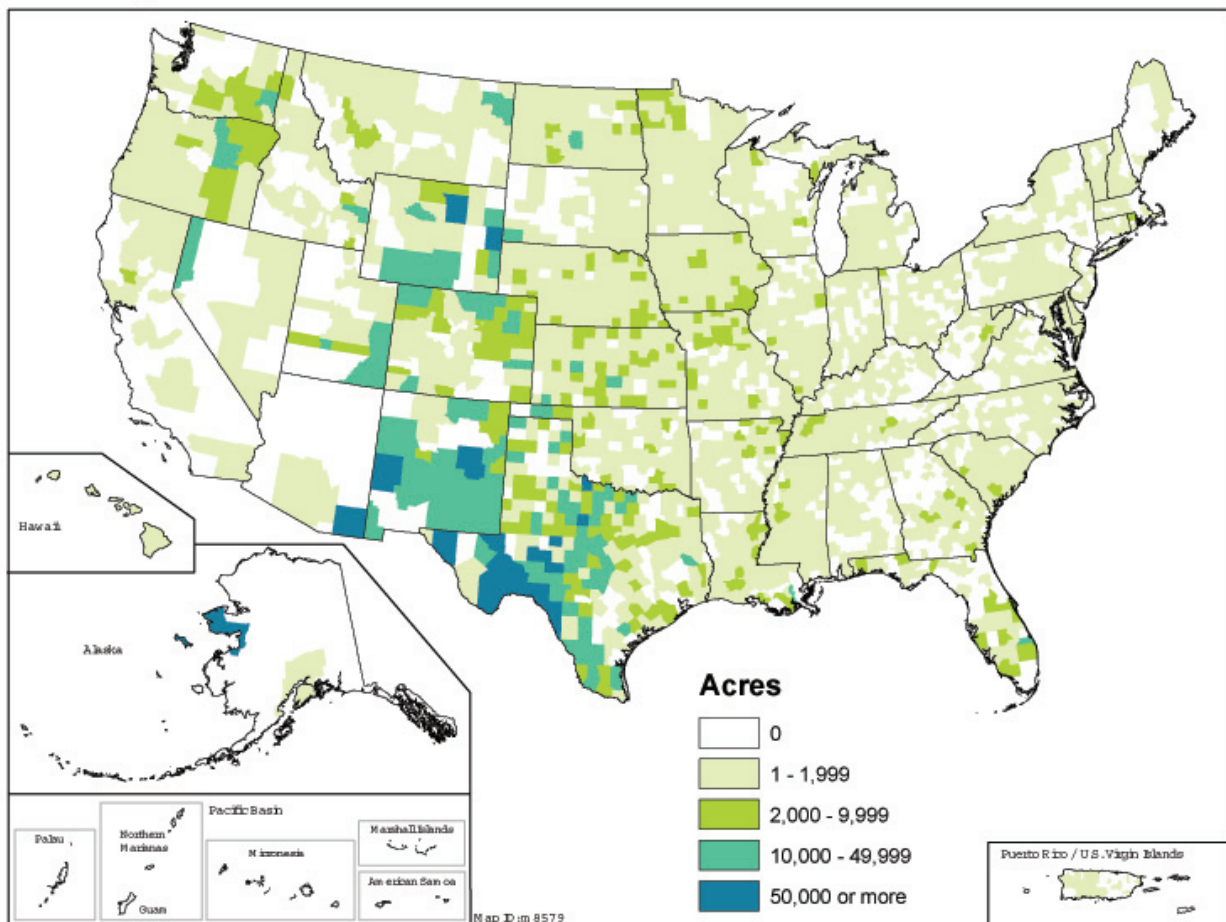
2005, NRCS joined the U.S. Department of the Interior to support the once-thought extinct Ivory-billed woodpecker. NRCS also teamed up with The Nature Conservancy to work on the Emiquon Wetlands Restoration Project in Illinois and provided \$10.7 million to help restore diverse plant and animal communities in the wetlands.

Whether you're a landowner, representative of a tribe, or part of a conservation group, NRCS will work with you to develop conservation plans. Anyone interested in more information about NRCS programs and wildlife habitat conservation should contact their local USDA Service Center or NRCS office. Information also is also on the Web at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>.

**Wildlife Habitat- Funding by Program 2002-2004**



## Wildlife Applied



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer

August 2005